

# Evaluator may have hourly or percentage fee

By Roger Boye

**M**ore questions on coins and currency are answered this week.

**Q**—My father left us a valuable collection of gold coins and silver dollars. We'd like to get them appraised, inasmuch as we know nothing about coins. How much would a professional charge to do the job?

*Y.P., Lake Villa*

**A**—Many coin dealers will evaluate small quantities of coins at no cost. For checking large accumulations, some dealers might bill you at an hourly rate [say \$40 or \$50 an hour] while others would charge a percentage of the total appraised value [perhaps 3 to 5 percent].

Also, dealers often will waive or rebate the fee if you later decide to sell the coins to the person who did the work.

**Q**—Recently we received a Statue of Liberty three-coin set from the United States Mint. The coins are beautiful except for a nick in the silver dollar. How should we complain about the problem?

*T.S., Chicago*

**A**—Send the set by registered mail to Deborah Johnson, Consumer Affairs Division, United States Mint, 10001 Aerospace Road, Lanham, Md. 20706. Enclose a letter requesting an exchange.

Another option—somewhat more time-consuming but cheaper—is to write to Johnson, explaining the problem. She'll probably send you at no cost a postage-paid label to use in returning your damaged set.

**Q**—In a recent column you mentioned that uncirculated \$500 bills might be worth as much as \$650 to a collector. Does the government still make large bills? Are they available at a bank? Also, whose portrait is [or was] on them?

*E.R., Chicago*

**A**—Uncle Sam last printed Federal Reserve notes valued at \$500 or more in 1946; a \$100 bill is tops today. Banks no longer issue large-denomination money, although a few coin dealers still sell the bills [at a premium over face value].

President William McKinley is depicted on the \$500 note of series 1928; President Grover Cleveland on the \$1,000; President James Madison on \$5,000; and Salmon P. Chase [Treasury secretary in Abraham Lincoln's administration] on the \$10,000.

Also, President Woodrow Wilson adorns a \$100,000 gold certificate, series 1934.